

Customer No. 24498
Attorney Docket No. PF020112
Final Office Action Date: April 30, 2008

Remarks/Arguments

In the Final Office Action dated April 30, 2008, it is noted that claims 1 – 9 are pending in the application.

In the present amendment, claim 1 is amended to more clearly and distinctly claim the subject matter that Applicants regard as their invention. The support for the claim amendment may be found in Applicants' specification, page 10, lines 33 – 35. No new matter is believed to be added.

Rejection of claims 1 – 3, 6 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ichikawa et al. ("Frame Transfer Protocol with Shortcut between Wireless Bridges"), hereinafter "Ichikawa," in view of Backes ("Transparent Bridges for Interconnection of IEEE 802 LANs") and Suzuki et al. (US Pat. 6,477,589), hereinafter "Suzuki"

Applicants submit that for at least the reasons discussed below claims 1 – 3, 6 and 9 are patentable over Ichikawa, Backes and Suzuki, either singly or in combination.

For example, amended claim 1 requires:

*"determining for each bridge portal the number of ports available to connect, to which other wireless devices may be connected;
electing a bridge portal as parent as a function of the number of such ports." (Emphasis added)*

In the Office Action, page 3, it is conceded by the Office that: "The combination of Ichikawa and Backes does not teach a root (parent) election process that takes into account the number of ports on a bridge." Because of this deficiency in the combination of Ichikawa and Backes, the Office cited Suzuki and alleged that Suzuki discloses the above claimed feature. Applicants respectfully disagree that Suzuki discloses such a feature.

Suzuki, Figs. 13 – 15, apparently discloses the basic sequence from the start of bus reset to the end of node ID allocation. When the bus reset has started, the nodes check the connection status of the connector ports 810 and count the connector ports

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810 that are connected to other nodes, i.e. the connected ports (S1601 and S1602 in Fig. 15, and column 12, lines 21 – 25). Therefore, the nodes in Suzuki only count the connected ports; however, the unconnected ports are not included in the count. Although the unconnected ports are not currently connected to a device, they are still ports **available to connect**, to which other wireless device may be connected. Therefore, the unconnected yet **available** ports to which other wireless devices may be connected are not counted by the nodes in Suzuki.

In the Advisory Action dated August 13, 2008, it is interpreted by the Office that the phrase “may be connected” is referring to a determination as to whether or not there is a node connected to a port, as in Suzuki. In the present amendment, Applicants have clarified the claim language in claim 1 to recite “*the number of ports **available to connect**, to which other wireless devices may be connected.*” This is clearly different from the number of port to which a node is attached, as in Suzuki.

Therefore, in view of at least the foregoing reasons, Suzuki does not teach or suggest the feature “determining for each bridge portal the number of ports available to connect, to which other wireless devices may be connected,” as recited in claim 1.

Similarly, independent claim 9, in part, requires:

“said microprocessor means being adapted to participate in a parent portal election process among bridge portals which is function of the availability of free ports on the wireless interfaces of portal devices of the wireless bridge.”

As discussed above, Suzuki only discloses the counting of **connected ports** and the election of a root port based on the number of undefined ports. Therefore, similar to the arguments set forth above for claim 1, Suzuki does not teach or suggest a parent portal election process among bridge portals which is function of the **availability of free ports** on the wireless interfaces of portal devices of the wireless bridge, as recited in claim 9.

In view of at least the foregoing reasons, claims 1 and 9 are believed to be patentable over Ichikawa, Backes and Suzuki, either singly or in combination. Claims 2, 3 and 6 are patentable because they depend from claim 1, with each claim

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containing further distinguishing features. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1 – 3, 6 and 9 under U.S.C. 103(a) is respectfully requested.

Rejection of claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ichikawa in view of Backes and Suzuki, and further in view of IEEE Standard 802.1w

Applicants submit that the secondary reference IEEE Standard 802.1w fails to cure the defects pointed out above with respect to the combination of Ichikawa, Backes and Suzuki as applied to claim 1. Therefore, claim 4 is patentable because it depends from claim 1 and contains further distinguishing features. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is respectfully requested.

Rejection of claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ichikawa in view of Backes, Suzuki and IEEE Standard 802.1w, and further in view of Moriya (US Pg Pub 2002/0027887)

Applicants submit that the secondary reference Moriya fails to cure the defects pointed out above with respect to the combination of Ichikawa, Backes and Suzuki as applied to claim 1. Therefore, claim 5 is patentable because it depends from claim 1 and contains further distinguishing features. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is respectfully requested.

Rejection of claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ichikawa in view of Backes and Suzuki, and further in view of Meier (WO 95/12942)

Applicants submit that the secondary reference Meier fails to cure the defects pointed out above with respect to the combination of Ichikawa, Backes and Suzuki as applied to claim 1. Therefore, claim 7 is patentable because it depends from claim 1 and contains further distinguishing features. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is respectfully requested.

Rejection of claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ichikawa in view of Backes and Suzuki, and further in view of Brown et al. (US Pat 5,606,664)


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Applicants submit that the secondary reference Brown et al. fails to cure the defects pointed out above with respect to the combination of Ichikawa, Backes and Suzuki as applied to claim 1. Therefore, claim 8 is patentable because it depends from claim 1 and contains further distinguishing features. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Having fully addressed the Examiner's rejections it is believed that, in view of the preceding amendments and remarks, this application stands in condition for allowance. Accordingly then, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully solicited. If, however, the Examiner is of the opinion that such action cannot be taken, the Examiner is invited to contact the applicants' attorney at (609) 734-6815, so that a mutually convenient date and time for a telephonic interview may be scheduled.

Respectfully submitted,
Perrot, et al.

By: 
Paul P. Kiel
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 40,677

THOMSON Licensing LLC
PO Box 5312
Princeton, NJ 08543-5312

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